

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 NEA-10 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-01
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4833
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
USINT BAGHDAD
ZEN AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
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AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
DIA WASHDC
USMISSION USUN

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 3027

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, MILI, PLO, UR, UVRXFX
SUBJECT: SOVIET MFA OFFICIAL DISCUSSION M.E.

REF: MOSCOW 2998 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY. DURING MARCH 4 M.E. TOUR D' HORIZON WITH POLITICAL
COUNSELOR, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, MFA N.E. COUNTRIES DEPT., YE. D.
PYRLIN MADE FOLLOWING POINTS:

-- IT IS TRUE THAT SOVIETS WILL RETURN 50 REBUILT MIG21
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ENGINES TO EGYPT (REFTEL);

--PALESTINE NATIONAL COUNCIL (PNC) WILL NOT LIKELY AMEND
PALESTINIAN CHARTER, BUT WILL PROBABLY DISCUSS FORM
OF GENEVA REPRESENTATION;

--ARAFAT MIGHT VISIT MOSCOW AFTER PNC MEETING;

--SOVIET SIDE FELT IT HAD BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN SOFTENING
GENERAL IRAQI AND LIBYAN RESISTANCE TO POLITICAL
SETTLEMENT IN M.E.

END SUMMARY.

2. MIG-21 ENGINES TO EGYPT. ASKED POINT-BLANK ABOUT SADAT'S
FEBRUARY 28 PRESS CONFERENCE STATEMENT ON SOVIET INTENTIONS TO
RETURN REBUILT MIG-21 ENGINES, PYRLIN SAID SIMPLY, "THIS IS
TRUE." HE DID NOT ELABORATE FURTHER.

3. SOVIET-EGYPTIAN RELATIONS. PYRLIN SAID THAT PUBLICATION
OF SADAT'S MEMOIRS, ESPECIALLY IN LIGHT OF SADAT'S FOREIGN
POLICY MOVES DURING LAST YEAR, HAD BECOME A POLITICAL ACTION WHICH
COULD NOT BE IGNORED, HENCE, THE PRAFDA EDITORIAL OF FEBRUARY
19. SADAT, WHO IS PRACTICALLY THE LAW IN EGYPT, WANTS TO
MAKE ADDITIONAL CONCESSIONS TO THE WEST, SAID PYRLIN, ADDING
THAT SOME OTHER EGYPTIAN LEADERS IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
OPPOSE AN "OPEN" ANTI-SOVIET POLICY. PYRLIN SAID SOVIETS WERE
STILL WAITING FOR A REPLY FROM THE EGYPTIAN SIDE ON THE ISSUE
OF DEBT RESCHEDULING. HE DESCRIBED AS A "GOOD SIGN" A
LESSENING OF ANTI-SOVIET MATERIAL IN EGYPTIAN MEDIA OVER THE
PAST FEW DAYS.

4. PALESTINE NATIONAL COUNCIL. PYRLIN SAID THAT "ACCORDING
TO INFORMATION WE HAVE" PALESTINIANS WERE NOT READY TO CHANGE
PALESTINIAN CHARTER, BUT PNC WOULD BE VERY IMPORTANT AND
PROBABLE AGENDA FOR DISCUSSION WOULD INCLUDE:
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--FORM OF PALESTINIAN PRESENCE AT GENEVA;

-- POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES FOR PALESTINIANS OF LEBANESE
CRISIS;

-- ACTUAL STATE OF RELATIONS BETWEEN PALESTINIANS AND
VARIOUS ARAB STATES ESPECIALLY SAUDI ARABIA; AND,
PERHAPS,

-- FORMATION OF A PALESTINIAN GOVERNMENT-IN-EXILE.

ASKED WHY PNC WOULD NOT TACKLE QUESTION OF CHARTER REVISION,
PYRLIN DESCRIBED FUTURE, PAST MEETING INCREASE IN SIZE OF
COUNCIL FROM 120-130 TO 290 WHICH HE SAID, WOULD REFLECT
IMPORTANCE OF ROLE OF FATAH AND PLO ITSELF. PYRLIN VOLUNTEERED
THAT THERE WAS NO INDICATION THAT ARAFAT WOULD BE REPLACED AND
HE IMPLIED THAT ARAFAT MIGHT VISIT MOSCOW AFTER PNC MEETING.

5. ASKED ABOUT RECENT VISITS OF QADHAFI AND SADAM HUSSEIN, PYRLIN SAID SOVIETS HAD TRIED MANY TIMES TO GET LIBYAN AND IRAQI FRIENDS TO "WIDEN THEIR CONCEPT" OF THEM.E. PROBLEM, "AND WE HAVE SUCCEEDED." SADAM HUSSEIN HAD EXPLAINED, SAID PYRLIN, THAT WHILE ARABS HAD A POLICY BASED ON THE PALESTINIAN PROBLEM, THEY UNDERSTOOD THAT SOVIET UNION "AS A GREAT POWER" HAD ITS OWN POLICY. THUS, CONCLUDED PYRLIN, WHILE ARABS OPPOSE UN RESOLUTIONS 242 AND 338, THIS IS NOT A REAL OBSTACLE TO OVERALL SETTLEMENT.

6. ASKED FOR HIS ASSESSMENT OF SYTENKO TRIP, PYRLIN EVADED SPECIFIC REPLY BY NOTING RECENT TRIPS OF OTHER WESTERN AND UN REPRESENTATIVES INTO REGION. END RESULT OF THIS "POLITICAL TOURISM", HE SAID, WAS GENERAL ACCEPTANCE BY ALL COUNTRIES OF IDEA OF NEED FOR OVERALL POLITICAL SOLUTION, BUT MAIN PROBLEM REMAINED ISRAELI-PLO MUTUAL NON-RECOGNITION. "PRACTICALLY SPEAKING" HE SAID, PLO RECOGNIZES POSSIBILITY OF COEXISTENCE
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WITH ISRAEL, A CONCLUSION HE BASED ON SYTENKO'S VISIT TO DAMASCUS AND CONVERSATION WITH ARAFAT. IN THIS CONTEXT, PYRLIN NOTED PALESTINE CENTRAL COUNCIL'S DECISION TO ESTABLISH "NATIONAL POWER" IN PORTION OF TERRITORIES TO BE LIBERATED FROM ISRAEL.

7. IN A SIDE NOTE, PYRLIN WAS ASKED ABOUT RESTORATION OF SUSPENDED SOVIET RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL. HE SAID THERE WERE TWO CONDITIONS FROM SOVIET SIDE:

-- SOME PROGRESS IN RESOLUTION OF M.E. CONFLICT; AND,

-- CESSATION OF ZIONIST ANTI-SOVIET CAMPAIGN "AROUND THE WORLD AND ALSO IN U.S."

8. COMMENT. PYRLIN SEEMED CONFIDENT OF HIS INFORMATION ON PNC DISCUSSIONS, ALTHOUGH HE WAS LESS SO WHEN DISCUSSING THE ALLEGED BENEFIT WHICH A DOUBLING OF THE SIZE OF THE PNC WOULD BRING TO FATAH AND THE PLO. HE CAREFULLY REFRAINED FROM AGREEING WITH SUGGESTED PHRASE "MORE MODERATE" TO DESCRIBE FUTURE COURSE OF AN EXPANDED PNC.

9. ON EGYPT, PYRLIN TRIED TO GIVE IMPRESSION THAT PRAVDA BLAST AT SADAT HAD CLEARED THE AIR AND THAT MOSCOW AND CAIRO COULD NOW BEGIN THE SLOW PROCESS OF REBUILDING THE MUTUAL RELATIONSHIP, BUT HE ALSO IMPLIED THAT AS LONG AS SADAT REMAINED IN POWER, MOSCOW WOULD REMAIN EXTREMELY SUSPICIOUS OF THE POSSIBILITY OF ACHIEVING REAL PROGRESS IN THIS REGARD.
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